1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

The country houses of the Kurds are for the most 396
part—like those of their neighbours, the Armenians, already described—underground dwellings, with the cattle-stable communicating with the *selamlik*, or public-room. The cooking stove consists of an 754
immense earthen jar, wider in the centre than at the top and bottom, which is sunk into the floor of the principal room. Into it a quantity of *tezek*, [572]
the native fuel of compressed straw and cow-dung, is thrown, and from an iron bar placed across the orifice a kettle is suspended by a chain. Over this stove the women sit, regardless of the smoke and flame issuing from the ground as from the crater of a volcano. The smoke finds its only exit by the little window high up in the wall, which admits the small [575]
modicum of light with which the inmates content themselves.

The furniture is very simple, being merely a few 562
carpets and quilts, some mattresses, and a number of leather wallets, which contain the wearing apparel and other household goods not in general use. This apartment serves as kitchen, sitting- and sleeping-room combined, three or four generations finding rest and comfort within its four walls. Out of this room opens the store-room, which contains a cemented cistern, like an ancient sarcophagus in shape, and a 413
number of earthen jars of different sizes, the largest 251
quite four feet high, in shape like the Greek amphora. 278
The cistern is used for making a kind of beer called *bōza*, a liquor called *nardenk*, extracted from the juice of the pomegranate, and other provisions for domestic

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

415

151/379 consumption, all of which are stored in the capacious jars.[1]

362 At Suleimanieh, the Kûrdish capital, the better sort of houses are square, one-storied buildings, standing on a basement about three feet high, and built [372] of sun-dried bricks with a plastering of mud mixed with chopped straw. The interiors of the principal rooms are lime-washed, and the flat roofs are formed of rafters covered with reeds and a coating of earth. 351 Round the house is a walled enclosure, divided into two courts by a cross-wall, which joins the house at each end near its centre, leaving the front, which is the *selamlik*, in one court, and the back, the *haremlik*, in the other. The gardens consist in great part of 367 turfy lawns shaded by willows, poplars, and mul- 311 berry trees, which, with rose-bushes, are disposed in little clumps, and watered by a stream which has its source in the mountains. The chief apartment is 358 the *talar*, a room quite open to the air in front, and used in warm weather as a general sitting and sleeping room by the family. Only the poorest persons 318 sleep on the roofs of their houses. Some, in the [312] greatest heats, which last only a month, sleep in *tchardaks*, or bowers, over the tanks in the courts, or in tents, to escape from the fleas, which are said to be even more formidable here than in the rest of 353 Turkey. In the *selamlik* is also a large spacious hall, dimly lighted, and used as a cool retreat in summer. The winter rooms are approached by a long, dark passage.

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[1] Xenophon, in his 'Anabasis', or *Retreat of the Ten Thousand*, mentions that the Karduchi kept their wine in cemented cisterns, lib. iv. chap. 2.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

538 Hodja administers a severe rebuke to the avaricious; in another he enunciates a wise maxim for general observance; in many he is a mere buffoon; and in some his own honesty and integrity are more than questionable. Underlying the majority, however, is a vein of quiet sarcasm; and the *jeux de mots*, so much appreciated by Orientals, and to which the Turkish language especially is so well adapted, are very frequent, but impossible to reproduce in another language.

The Adventures of a Cooking Pot.

539 One day the Hodja borrowed a cauldron (*kazán*) from his neighbour. Now this neighbour was a bad
● [illegible] man, and the Hodja did not like him. After the cauldron had remained some days with him, the owner knocked at the Hodja's door and re-demanded his property. The Hodja placed a smaller pot in the cauldron, and handed it to him. When the owner observed this, he said to Nasr-ed-Din:

"This little pot is not mine."

The Hodja replied, "Thy cauldron has given birth to a young one; take them both, I do not want thy goods."

At this the owner of the cauldron rejoiced greatly, and exclaimed, "*Allah kerim*—Allah is great! with the Almighty nothing is impossible!" and so saying, he took the pots and went his way.

A month or two afterwards the Hodja again went to his neighbour to borrow a cauldron. The man brought out the biggest he possessed. "But that is too big," objected Nasr-ed-Din.

nd distaff for spinning thread, and a number of metal 283 286
ettles for dyeing the finished cloth a simple brown or
lue. In the villages women do a certain amount of 531
mbroidery, for example, two flowered designs on a loosely- 286 294
oven piece of cloth which can be cut out and stitched
ogether to form a woman's cap, and of knitting, such as
tockings in crudely dyed black and white yarn. Small, buff 323
ottery jugs are fashioned without the wheel and daubed with
esigns in a red slip. There is a great deal of woodcarving, 372
uch as ladles, combs, bowls, cigarette-holders, and
alking-sticks, some of which find their way out of the [439]
rea to Erbil and even Baghdad. Save for a few pieces of 439
arving, however, almost none of these products ever
each a larger market than that of Rowandus and bring only
he smallest prices throughout the district. Women offer
hem for sale to the merchants in the hope of realizing a
ew coppers with which to buy trinkets, and none of these
ransactions, compared with agricultural or dairy produce,
as great importance, either for merchant or for villager.

The collection of faggots and production of charcoal 372 314
or winter fuel are important services performed by the
illagers for the larger towns of the district. In the 372
ummer, blocks of mountain snow are in great demand in the
own of Rowandus, particularly for chilling drinks such
s sherbet or _mastaw_ (a mixture of curdled milk, _mast_, and
ater, _aw_, drunk from a wooden bowl by means of a cumber- [405]●
ome wooden ladle), as well as large quantities of oak and 313
illow branches which are constructed into summer arbors [illegible]

agricultural concerns and their concomitant social implications in the life of the townspeople. 241

Of those who furnish the community with food and drink, the tea-shop owner or *chaychi* might be considered first. There are ten *chaykhanas* in the town. That located beside the serai has already been noticed, and the other nine are all within the *bazar* area. The buildings vary considerably, for example, three occupy second storeys overlooking the street, but the furnishings are singularly uniform. One such building, the "sinner's" *chaykhana* spoken of above, was of a single storey, rectangular, and built of mud-brick, with a yard on the street and a little porch overlooking the gorge behind. The yard, in use during fair weather, had a number of high, unfinished wooden benches and chairs arranged about it, and the same type of furniture was to be found within the building. In a corner of the room near the door was a huge brass urn, not unlike those used in our restaurants for coffee, a pottery water-jug, and a collection of utensils. The owner usually occupied a bench beside the door and had a brass tray on the table before him in which he made change. He had a collection of celluloid counters for keeping a tally on tea sent out to the merchants. A waiter in skull-cap and slippers served the customers and brought the money to the owner. 265 347 [352] [415]● [451]

The etiquette of entering a *chaykhana* varies somewhat according to the personalities of its customers. In 265 576 a formal situation, particularly when the person entering is a stranger and receives some scrutiny from those already seated, the visitor pauses momentarily in the doorway and murmurs, "th peace be upon you," as-Salam alaykum, which is returned by a low chorus of "and upon you the peace," wa alaykum as-Salam. On taking a seat it is customary for the newcomer to turn to each of his several neighbors and to raise himself slightly in his place, touching his forehead with the right hand in a salute, saying, "the godness of God," Ullah bikharr, which is returned with similar salute and the same words. 265 576

The refreshment of a chaykhana are limited. Tea is served in small tulip-shaped glasses (istakhan) on porcelain saucers with little brass spoons. A piece of coarse sugar is placed in the bottom of the glass before the liquid is decanted. Mastaw, curdled milk and water, is served in a large wooden bowl with a ladle. Some chaykhanas offer sherbets, sweet syrup mixed with water in a tumbler. No coffee is sold in the chaykhana, nor are there any edibles, although youngsters often hawk bread or sweets. Entertainment consists only in conversation or tawli, backgammon, the board and pieces furnished by the management. 265 [45] [272] [262] [442] [524]

The decorations may be a few framed photographs, usually of the ruler, some coloured illustrations torn from a Egyptian magazine, or metal plaques enamelled with a verse from the Koran. Some of these decorations seem to conceal curious histories. A chaykhana in Sulaymaniya, for example, displayed an old framed photograph of the Swedish royal family. 353 265 diced and moulded about a metal skewer (*kabab*) or alternated in whole pieces of flesh and fat upon the same implement (*tikka*). A charcoal fire is prepared in a rectangular metal brazier and brought to a bed of glowing coals with a wicker fan. The skewers are placed over this fire, and turned, with continuous fanning of the blaze, until the meat is done. The grilled product is largely sold by order to private homes, but some may be used in the restaurant and still other offered to customers in a *chaikhana*. As with the butcher, one must place a request on the day preceding, for after noontime the *kababchi* has often exhausted his supply of meat. The name of this occupation can be used in insult, and has much the same meaning and strength as "chimney-sweep" in England of a hundred years ago. 252 265 [354] 265 437 [578]

One of the most important items in the diet of the townspeople is bread, and a huge quantity is baked daily, both by professionals and housewives. In addition to the men who are bakers by profession, there are a number of women who prepare a surplus beyond their needs at home which is peddled about the town. The usual sales technique involves equipping the children of the house, either of baker or of housewife, with basketfuls and dispatching them from shop to shop in the *bazar* and from house to house in the town. The flour, purchased from merchants or mill-owners, is a coarsely-ground, greyish product, and, with the addition of water, is kneaded into dough in a huge, flat bottomed tub. 256 [262] [443] [857] [415]

Aside from this
work in building and repair, the only significant production 335
of the carpenters is the small chest used by housewives for 322
their goods. Almost every married woman has a collection 322 422
of "treasures," clothing, jewelry, glassware, and the like, 495 ●
which dates from her wedding (it is, in fact, a part of [583]
her dowry, and a significant economic commodity, as it may
include a sizeable sum in gold), and which is displayed
on festive occasions. These goods are stored in wooden
chests, sometimes covered with sheets of tin, and always
brightly painted. Two shops in Rowanduz maintained by
carpenters display a large number of these, and there is
always a demand for them in the event of a wedding. The 412
carpenter's tools and equipment, mattocks, hammers, planes, [939]
chisels, nails, and so on, are almost all imported from
Europe or elsewhere in the Middle East. Wooden biers, and 322
occasionally coffins, for the dead are also made by the [764]
carpenters. Smaller items of wood, such as cradles, are [854]
fashioned in the households of villagers.

The main work of the farriers and blacksmiths is 326
the shoeing of horses, mules, and donkeys. The govern- 231
ment veterinarian attends to the beasts of the civil [232]
service and army, but, although his services are available
to the townspeople, most prefer the farriers who, in
addition to their craft, are thought to be experts in
curing animal diseases. The workshops of both farriers and
blacksmiths, with their distinctive anvils and charcoal
fires, are within the bazar, and the shoeing of a donkey

is an event which always attracts a number of spectators. 326
The blacksmiths also forge a few crude agricultural tools [231]
and do a certain amount of repair work. There is extensive
scavenging of iron, and the blacksmith's establishment con-
tains a huge number of odds and ends which might some day
find a customer. Hinges and nails, for example, are pur- [414]
chased by builders and householders. Tinsmiths exercise 326
considerable importance in domestic economy in the fabrica- 415
tion and, particularly, the repair of cooking utensils, and
their workshops in the *bazar* are daily sought by a large
number of persons, not only from the town, but from the
district at large. The poorly-made metal pots and pans
are always in need of repair, and the tinsmith, much more
so than many of his fellows, has an extremely brisk trade.
One important specialty is the repair of cracked or broken 323
porcelain dishes. Large platters, imported long ago from 415
abroad and used in serving food, are precious family heir-
looms and handed down from generation to generation. A
crack is repaired by drilling a series of tiny holes through
the dish on either side of the break and fastening them
together with metal cleats. One of the dearest possessions 415
of a housewife is her samovar for brewing tea, and those 326
of the wealthier families, of etched brass or pewter,
were brought in by trade from Russia or Iran many years
ago and inherited through the family. The tinsmiths
manufacture a bright, but poorly soldered, tea-urn of
sheet tin which is in great demand among the poorer
villagers. A villager carrying one of these home from 415

Rowanduz or Erbil is a proud sight along the road, and its arrival an event of great joy in his household. 45

The shops of the cobblers are also to be found in the bazar, and, like the carpenters and tinsmiths, they live more by maintenance than by manufacture. 294 291 A variety of footgear is worn in the area, including European boots, shoes, and women's sandals, and several local types of slippers. Some village men wear a simple moccasin of raw-hide laced across the top of the foot with thongs, but the cobblers of Rowanduz have no hand in these, just as none would attempt the manufacture of a European shoe. One type made in the town, extremely popular with men of the lower classes, is a slipper with rubber soles (cut from an old automobile tire) and uppers of woven cord which have some elasticity. Otherwise, only some simple leather slippers and wooden clogs (kabkabs) are produced for women. 413 [489] One shop is filled with European shoes of all styles, brought in from Baghdad or abroad, and almost all persons of the upper classes, government personnel and local population, affect these for outdoor wear. Most of the cobbler's work 296 is thus in repair, particularly on Fridays, for the soldiers from the barracks bring boots which, stout as they are, suffer considerably from the rocky terrain. The two town bootblacks are middle-aged men who wander among the shops and chaykhanas with their wooden polish-boxes, looking for [521] customers and passing on gossip with considerable banter.

An important trade is that of the cloth-sellers or 443

tailors, seamstresses and mothers are busy during the days 294
preceding the celebration in their preparation, something 155
which resembles our own habit of appearing in new clothing 796
on Easter.

As in the case of seamstresses, a number of women 296
belonging to the poorer households find casual employment
as laundresses to those who can afford the expense. There
is no specific "wash day," just as there are no fixed
periods in the home for changing clothing or linen. A
laundress may be called whenever enough soiled clothing
warrants her appearance. Almost every larger dwelling con- [352]
tains a tank or tub, usually submerged to the level of the [415]
court, for a multiplicity of purposes, among them washing
dishes, bathing infants, and laundry. For washing, coarse [308]
laundry soap obtained from the general merchants (no domestic
soap is made) is used, or water alone. Such laundering involves pounding and wringing on the stones beside the tank, and garments washed too often in this fashion soon show signs of wear. In one's experience, a handkerchief, which had withstood perhaps two years of cleaning in the United States, rapidly deteriorated after two [illegible] to the laundress in Rowanduz, and it was similar with other items of apparel. Appreciative of this, laundry is not done by the townspeople with the regularity known in Northern Europe or America. Dry cleaning is unknown, and, to their chagrin, the woolen suits of the officials go into the tank with everything else. One such official, a Baghdadi by origin, possessed a suit with two pairs of trousers, one

its imprint the so-called "Hand of Fatima" (referred, 342
almost certainly ex post facto, to the daughter of the 282
Prophet), a symbol found in almost all parts of the [777]
Middle East, particularly in amulet jewelry. The same [75]
sacrifice is applied to new additions to the house, and,
in case a new storey has been built, the throat of the
animal is slit over a window sill. It will be seen that [585]
when a bride enters her new home, an animal is similarly
slaughtered before the threshold and the maiden's sandal
is dipped in its blood. It is an incredible breach of 579
etiquette, if not criminal, to enter a house without
announcing oneself, a usage which is supposed to have an
origin in the life of the Prophet, and custom demands that
the visitor knock and wait outside until ushered in. The
door is usually left ajar during the day, but anyone save
members of the immediate family are prohibited from entrance until permission is given.

Water flows past the houses in narrow ditches beside 312
the streets, and is conducted to an interior basin by means 271
of a pipe. Every larger house has somewhere, typically in 45
the vestibule of the front door, a huge earthen jar for
drinking water with a capacity of twenty or thirty gallons
which is filled whenever necessary. This jar, held a few
feet off the ground in an iron or wooden frame, has a
porous bottom through which the liquid is filtered,
dripping slowly into a second receptacle beneath it, and,
by reason of evaporation, the filtered water is cooled to

some extent. For immediate use, water is dipped into 312
one of a number of quart jugs, an unfired cream-coloured 415●
vessel with a wide body, a long narrow neck, and a flaring 271
mouth, turned on the wheel and imported commercially from
Mosul. For further cleansing, a piece of cheesecloth is
often tied over the mouth of these jugs. Glass tumblers
are used to serve water, and, if it is offered to a number
of guests, it is necessary that the glass be cleaned after
each person has used it. This is done by pouring out a
little from the jug, circulating it in the glass, and
tossing it on the earthen floor or into the courtyard. The 312
water in the basin is not used for drinking, but for a
variety of other purposes, washing cooking utensils and
dishes, bathing infants, laundry, and so on.

It is interesting that the public bath, the hammam, 515
so much a feature of life in Medieval and Ottoman times, [176]
has largely disappeared in modern Kurdistan.[1] Bathing in
Rowanduz is confined to private homes, and there is no
place in the town, including the khan or hotel, where a
person might obtain bathing facilities for a price. The
larger houses contain a closet or a small room for this
purpose, and the person is furnished with a bucket or tub
of water which he pours over himself with a dipper of some
sort, usually a tin can. Waste runs out through a drain
in the floor. Toilet facilities are also to be found in 514

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[1] [illegible], 1951, p. 175.

a closet or booth, usually on the first floor of the house, with a door, as in the case of the bath, of wooden planks or a cloth hanging. This booth contains little more than a slit trench, perpendicular to the entrance, leading down into the foundations of the house and ultimately outside, and a metal ewer, a long-necked vessel with a capacity of about a pint, containing water. The left hand is used for cleansing, and, while never so stringently abhorred as among certain Arab groups, it is considered impolite to use it in formal dining, save in tearing apart food, although everyday practice admits considerable latitude. 514 [515] [515] 526 576

Interior lighting is furnished by fuel lamps. Before the first World War, a kerosene lantern, described as "Hungarian," was in use, imported together with its fuel from Russia through Iran. Since that time, a new and brighter type of lamp, making use of gasoline put under pressure by an attached pneumatic pumping device, has come into use in the wealthier homes. In a number of the poorer houses a small, simple oil lamp, which provides only a feeble glow, is utilized as an occasional night light. Save during Ramadan, when one or two meals are taken during the evening, most of the houses are completely darkened soon after nightfall. Heating during winter does not receive systematic attention, although the wealthy make use of kerosene stoves. The general remedy is to don additional clothing. The larger houses have a woodpile, 354 [409] [291] [372] not invariable. The water-jug, with a glass tumbler turned down over its mouth, always stands beside the door. 352 [415] [271]

During the heat of summer, almost all of the families of the town, rich and poor alike, sleep on their roofs, and the bedsteads and bedding are moved there for a time. Again, because of the necessity of sheltering the women from the gaze of outsiders, windbreaks of oak branches and brush are built up if the house itself does not afford suitable protection. Mosquito netting, the same material used in some of the garments of a bride and obtained from the cloth-sellers, is not used indoors, except to cover an infant's cradle, but is many times placed over the beds on the roof. In the wealthier homes everyone has an individual bed, while in those poorer the children sleep together in a tangle of blankets and quilts. Where a house contains more than a single couple, there is a necessary division of its sleeping quarters, because two couples do not customarily rest in the same room nor should a couple occupy one with a male relative, an uncle or a brother. As a general rule, it might be stated that a woman never sleeps in the same room with any one other than her father, her brothers, her husband, and her sons. On the other hand, there seems to be little effort made to conceal sexual intercourse from the children, who, however, are either too sleepy or too well aware of it to find it of much interest. 513 [351] 352 513 [864] 833 864

The *diwankhana* or guest-room is mandatory for anyone of social pretension and is found in most cases on the first 353 574

unused in the town. Cooking, particularly of grilled 342
meats, can produce a great quantity of smoke, and even 354
in the houses of the wealthy certain recipes are prepared
in the yard. The kitchen itself is typically a bare
room containing as permanent fixtures the large, beehive
oven and a fire-pit or hearth beside it. As will be 354
appreciated from the description of the diet, the type of 252
fire employed, of which there are several, depends upon
the dish. The oven is used for baking, the fire-pit for
heating larger vessels, the charcoal brazier for broiling,
and the brass kerosene burner, one of the most widespread
intrusions into Kurdish life in recent decades, for a
large number of smaller tasks. These last, manufactured in [439]
Sweden or Germany and purchased from the merchants, are
diminutive stoves, the legs of which support the fuel
tank, bending above it over the burner to form a platform,
and use kerosene under mechanically induced pressure, as
in the gasoline lamps. Boiling water, warming food, preparing
tea or coffee, and a dozen other lesser jobs are
accomplished with these devices, and even the poorer townspeople
boast of their possession. There is a heterogeneous 415
collection of metal cooking utensils, ranging from the wide,
flat-bottomed tub in which dough is kneaded to tin bowls
and cups. Niches in the walls are used for their storage,
as well as the dishes in everyday use, those not too prized
to be guarded among the treasures of the wife or displayed
in the guest-room. Imperishable food, flour, sugar, tea, 251
and the like, is kept in containers in the kitchen or a

served alone and the diner can dip slices of cucumber in the dish. Fruits appear only in their seasons, for there are no means of preserving them, and have little other preparation than sprinkling in cold water. Apples baked with sugar, shiumi sayaw, are considered a delicacy. 252 262 [251]

Of the beverages, tea is prepared in the home three times each day, and is either brewed in a samovar or, more simply, boiled in an open pot. Its service, in small glasses partially filled with sugar, has been noted. There are several ways of treating tea, and one example is that in which a tiny piece of crystallized lemon, limun dusi, is placed in the glass, giving the liquid a citrus flavor. Coffee or hot chocolate are not made regularly in the household, and are reserved for guests. The coffee, of the pulverized "Turkish" variety, is mixed with boiling water, in which a cardamon seed may have been placed for aromatic taste, in the measure of one teaspoon of coffee and one of sugar for each cup desired, and is served in small demi-tasses as a thick, granular syrup. Sherbet consists of a spoonful or two of fruit extract, although some of it is said to be derived from flowers, mixed in a tumbler with water and mountain snow. Fresh grape juice is also found in the summer. Mastaw, curdled milk thinned with water, is drunk throughout the year, but plain milk, save in the case of infants whose mothers are unable to feed them, has very little use, perhaps from fear of undulant fever. 272 [415] [263] [574] [263] [853]

The diet of the civil officials and their families 262 flavoring is anise, causes the liquid to become milky in colour. A necessary accompaniment is the meze (from a Greek word, universal with the liquor) which consists of a large variety of small dishes to be eaten while drinking, ranging from nuts and cucumbers to cold chicken and grilled meat. The red wine of the Nestorians is not used by the officials and officers. Most of them, as a concession to Islam, forswear intoxicants during Ramadan, but the remaining months of the year offer no such obstacle. These gatherings, of which gambling is the prominent diversion, will be met again. 273 [262] [264] [785] [525]

In the household the service of food depends for its character on whether or not guests are present. If members of the family are alone, they eat together, men, women and children, seated on the floor, or, in a few cases, at a table. The place of eating varies somewhat, and can be the kitchen itself, a neighboring sleeping-room, the diwankhana, or the courtyard. The food is served in large dishes by the women and these are placed in the center of the gathering. Often silverware and plates are used, and otherwise, only the fingers and a piece of bread. There appears to be little correspondence with social status among the wealthy in this matter, although the poor always eat with their hands. The head of the house takes the first bite, saying as he does so, Bismillah, "In the name of God," and others follow him. The servants have their meal after the family is finished. In a family gathering of a larger size, in which men and 264 [495] ● [782] [574]

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432
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Fig. 4. Peasant woman baking bread on circular iron sheet. Halabja (See p. 43).

a very strong one as she was definitely in opposition to Shaikh Mahmud of Sulaimani, head of the holy family of Barzinji shaikhs[illegible], and the representative of the dream of a free and independent Kurdistan. Lady Adila died in 1924 during the British mandate period. Her grave, which I visited at a burial ground near the village of [illegible], some distance from Halabja, was in 1957 deserted and neglected. My interpreter told me that it was in accordance with Lady Adila's own wish that her grave was neither marked nor embellished, but added that people drove sheep and goats over the grave, and that, altogether, there was but little sympathy for the memory of Lady Adila of Halabja, an attitude that appeared to be shared by my interpreter, who, on another occasion, referred with the deepest veneration to Lady Adila's political opponent Shaikh Mahmud, as the real ruler and malik (king) of Kurdistan.

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[43]

Whereas Lady Adila thus cooperated with the British mandate authorities at the beginning of the mandate, another prominent woman, Hafsa Khan, cousin of Shaikh Mahmud and married to his brother, Shaikh Kadir, arose in the opposition circles of Sulaimani. She was sufficiently wise to accept responsibility for a group of British officers which had been taken prisoner by her cousin and brother-in-law, Sheikh Mahmud, during the disturbances in that area in 1919. The wisdom of this was demonstrated shortly afterwards when Sheikh Mahmud was captured near the Bazian Pass and, on account of her behaviour, a sentence of death passed upon him was reduced to imprisonment for life[?], which later was rescinded.

Another prominent Kurdish woman, Fátima Khan, is referred to by Edmonds[?]. After her husband's death she administered his estate which comprised eight villages. Elected by the inhabitants of the villages she negotiated, although a woman, with the government authorities.

The information available from various such authors can be summed up as follows: The Kurdish woman is said to possess a far freer position than is the case in other Muslim areas. She does not veil, except in towns and urban surroundings. Monogamy prevails. "Love marriages" can occur.

Below I shall describe the extent to which this information differs with my personal experience as a woman amongst Kurdish women in Southern Kurdistan.

Fig. 3. Peasant woman making [illegible] in a [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible]

Fig. 6. Urban milieu. Uneducated married women and educated girl sitting out in the courtyard. Sulaimani.

The Kurdish women whose cultural pattern is to be considered below cannot, in my view, be grouped under the common denominator of "the Kurdish woman". Even on the basis of such relatively limited investigation material as was available to me, four different female environments can be pointed to, the cultural patterns of which vary very greatly. The first and most obvious division is that between village and provincial environments, but these two groups can be further subdivided, though on different principles. 562 184

The village milieu can be socially divided into two strata, the aristocracy and the peasants. To the former belong the sheikh houses in [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible]. I visited peasant houses in [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible]. The police official's house I stayed in at the [illegible] town of [illegible] was in between the two. 565 393

The provincial town environment (for the sake of simplicity called urban milieu) I first met with in the local Liwa capital, Sulaimani, but also in [illegible], [illegible], [illegible] and [illegible]. The women of this urban milieu could be sharply divided into two groups, the "educated" who had been given schooling, and the "uneducated" who, like the village women, could neither read nor write. These two groups of urban women could be met with in the same house, as was the case in the house of my interpreter, where the husband's two wives belonged to the "uneducated" group while the daughters had attended school and thus represented the other group. But even though these two groups of urban women were found within the same household their cultural patterns were quite different. 321 322 395

The part of Kurdistan I visited (Southern Kurdistan) is mountainous and lies in the northern subtropical zone. The year consists of a cool winter half year, with rain from November to April, and a hot, rainless summer from May to October. As an exception I experienced a violent shower on June 7th (1957). The villages lie on the sides of hills above the cultivated fields. The houses, for the most part built together in rows, lie in terraces above each other up the steep slope of the hill, so that the flat roof of the underlying house forms an open space outside the one above it. The communications consist of mountain tracks bridged by scree and heaped-up stones, at the bottom of dried-out watercourses. No attempt has anywhere been made to level the ground. The watercourses and springs 131 132 361

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 352

[illegible]

[illegible] 357 415

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●

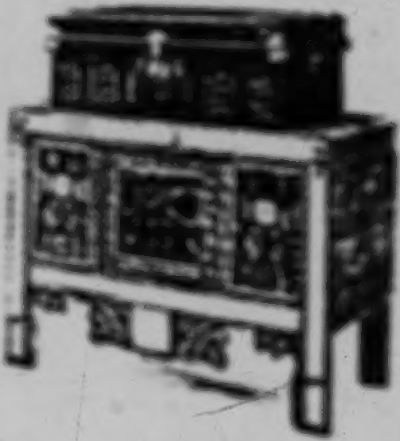

Fig. 27. Tin chest (E. 2270) on top of wooden locker chest (E. 2270) with painted glass front showing Muhammad's riding animal Buraq. Topzawa.

352 415 decoration. At the side of these stood their predecessors, still used by the women and children of the house: blue, green or red painted tin chests (E. 2270). The key, [illegible], to the padlock on each of these was carried by the owner of the chest in her little [illegible] to which it was attached by a safety-pin. These chests represented practically the only private sphere the women had to which others had no access. There was also an example of the wooden chest with legs, [illegible] (E. 2270). Made in the city of [502] Sulaimani by craftsmen using [illegible] wood from packing cases, with a garishly painted glass front, the panels of which were decorated with bouquets of flowers, [illegible], and Muhammad's riding animal with a woman's head, Buraq, it had reached here about a year ago as part of a bride's dowry [323] and had ended in a corner of the middle storeroom. The beds also moved about a good deal in this cultural pattern, which must originally have been based on the tent and its breaking up of objects[illegible].

513 352 The one bed was left to say the two sons of the house usually sleep in the two others. The rest of the family slept on the floor. The original arrangement of the bed was further stressed by the fact that they were never made. During the daytime the bedclothes were rolled together and stacked with the wadded mattresses and blankets, with or without linen covers, used by the rest of the family, the whole being covered over in one big heap. In the evening whilst the pallets for the rest of the families were being prepared, the beds were made in the area of the house in which one had decided to sleep. There, 342 for the night, was the bedroom. The greater utilisation of the store room must also be viewed with this flexibility in the use of the dwelling. In the store room were kept not only a stock of commodities like food and drink but also articles of value. Things we should have on show or lying easily accessible

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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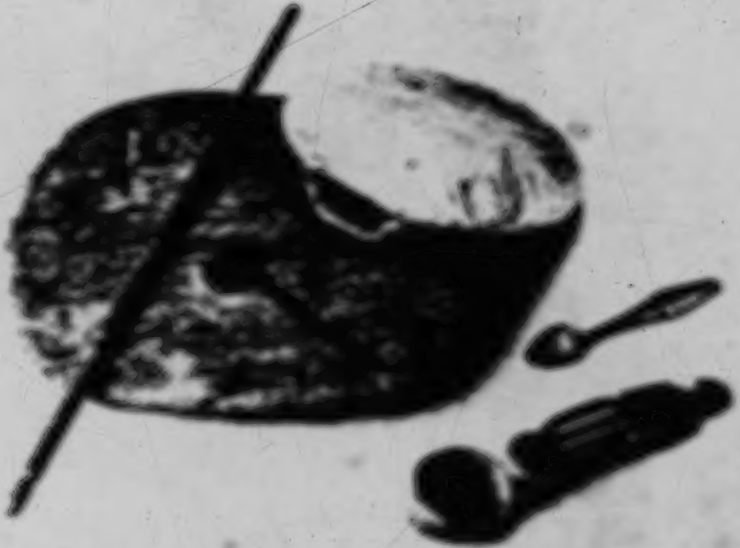

Fig. 16. Baking implements: table (E. [illegible]), rolling stick (E. [illegible]), baking pillow (E. [illegible]), and iron spatula (E. [illegible]). Small wooden spoon for eating (E. [illegible]) and wooden ladle for drinking (E. [illegible]).

252 oven, [illegible], or on an iron sheet, [illegible] or [illegible]. In both cases the woman, who squats on the floor, uses a low baking table, [illegible], cut out in one piece from a large block of wood producing a thick, rectangular sheet with rounded corners and a slightly convex surface, supported by four short legs or blocks narrowing towards the floor (E. [illegible]: sheet [illegible], height [illegible] m. – E. [illegible]: sheet [illegible], height [illegible] m.).

[416] When baking in the earth oven several women, as a rule [illegible], work together. The lumps of dough are rolled out with a rolling pin, a thin wooden stick about [illegible] cm. in length, [illegible] (E. [illegible]), decorated at both ends by [illegible] incised lines all round. The two women use this implement to roll the dough into quite thin pancakes. During this process the sheet of dough is often lifted from the baking table by means of the stick, more flour being strewn on the surface before the dough is put back to be rolled out still thinner. The skill of the women was evaluated in proportion to the thinness to which they could roll out the dough.

The dough is then lifted up, hanging over the stick, and placed on the "baking pillow", [illegible], which is shaped like a thick, rectangular pillow and made of cloth. On the one side is an opening

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the wall of the [illegible] or fastened to the wall facing the courtyard; it could also be hung up on a tripod, ugal, formed by three sticks placed in the ground in front of the house.

The churning sack is jerked back and forth by a woman who either stands or squats in front of it. After about 20 minutes the sack is opened and tepid water is poured down, whereafter the sack is closed again. During the next half-hour the woman repeatedly looks at the contents of the sack, and when butter has formed in the shape of white grains swimming in the whey the contents are poured into a metal pot. The grains are assembled with the fingers into a whitish clump of butter of rather loose consistency. The daily, not very large, quantity of newly-churned butter is placed in a clay jar on top of that churned the day previously, strewn with salt and covered with a piece of plastic material. On rare occasions butter is eaten as a delicacy, but its main use is for cooking. The freshly churned, slightly salted butter does not keep well. Butter to be sold in the towns is boiled repeatedly and the impurities removed. In this clarified state it is called [illegible]

Fig. 16. Woman churning. The leather sack made of a whole sheep skin is suspended from a pole in the mud wall. [illegible]

[illegible] Hansen / II-5 (1957) 1961 [illegible]

HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO FOUR FEMALE ENVIRONMENTS

Village environment. In Topzawa the baking of bread takes place about three times weekly in the house's earth oven. This is attended to by three women at a time, mother, daughter and servant girl, or mother, daughter and a neighbour, who in addition also did her own baking in order to utilise the oven's capacity.

Goats, sheep and cows are milked by mother and daughter as long as the cattle return home in the evening. When, in the summer, the sheep and goats are handed over to the care of the village shepherd, the servant girl goes out to the mountains twice a day, at about 11a.m. and 5p.m., with the other women of the village to meet the shepherd and his charges. Milk is made daily in the house. Butter is churned every morning. The churning sack is hung up on a beam in the [illegible] or on a beam

Fig. 18. Woman crouching before the fire. Topzawa.

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Fig. [illegible]. Village women go out to the mountains to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] a day. [illegible]

Fuel is collected in the mountains by women with axe and carried home on the back. Cattle dung is collected in the mountains, kneaded with straw and dried into cakes on the wall of the house. The [illegible] of the [illegible] takes place at the water basin from which water is fetched, often far from the home. Wheaten grain is ground in the house of a neighbour who owns a quern.

Cooking and washing up is done at home, whilst the washing of clothes takes place at the spring basin in small villages and at big, covered parochial basins in the larger ones, by all the women in association. The clothes are laid out to dry at the same place. Beds are made by all the women of the house working together. When the family slept on the roof the bedding remained there, [illegible] was rolled up during the day. An extra task at [illegible] was the glazing of the roof with a mixture of clay and chaff; this was done collectively at the various houses in turn. To sum up: Apart from the cooking of food and bed making, a great part of the domestic activities take place outside the house and are performed by the women of the village collectively. In [illegible] the distribution of milk and the treatment of the milk were also collective.

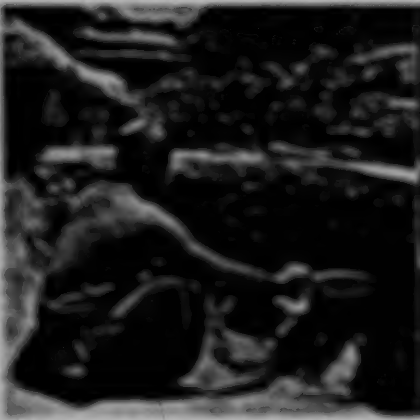
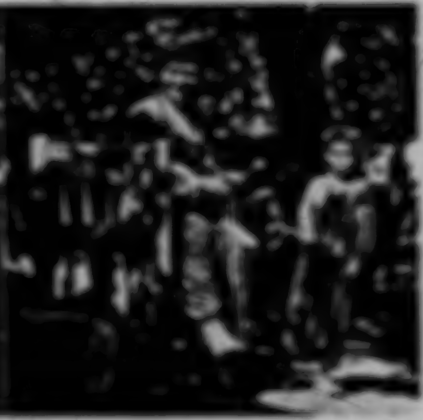

Fig. 47. Material folded round a stick is boiled in a pot. (Cf. fig. 48). [illegible]
Fig. 48. When [illegible] a rope the [illegible] is used both by men and women. [illegible]

be done by either men or women. On the other hand I only saw men weaving sashes (Silver Runners). After the material of narrow widths has been woven in suitable lengths for jackets (8 yds.) and trousers (12 yds.), respectively, it is "pleated". The separate piece of material is folded to a third or quarter of its width, wound around a flat wooden stick (E. 2286), 0.20 m. long, and secured by a stitch or so. The wound material is then boiled in a pot for a few minutes, unwound from the stick and stretched out to dry in its folded state. After this the material is permanently pleated with two or three sharp pleats in each cloth breadth (cf. fig. 48). 316 [162]

The production of clay vessels. There are both glazed and unglazed red clay vessels. The glazed type are sold in the city of the bigger provincial towns where the women buy them for storing various things, including butter. 323

The unglazed vessel (E. 2291) is used to fetch water from wells and basins and for putting drinking water into shady spots in the courtyard to keep cool. These unglazed vessels are produced of local clay in the villages. They are not made by the individual woman for her own use, but by a pair of specially expert women working together with a view to sale. The jars, which are more or less bottle-shaped are built up of clay coils without the aid of a potter's wheel[?]. They are then polished inside and out, fitted on the side with a loop handle between the body and neck, and decorated with a curved rim affixed to the body opposite the handle. It is then further embellished by stick impressions on the rim and an engraved longitudinal groove on the same side of the handle. When the jars that have [163] [53]

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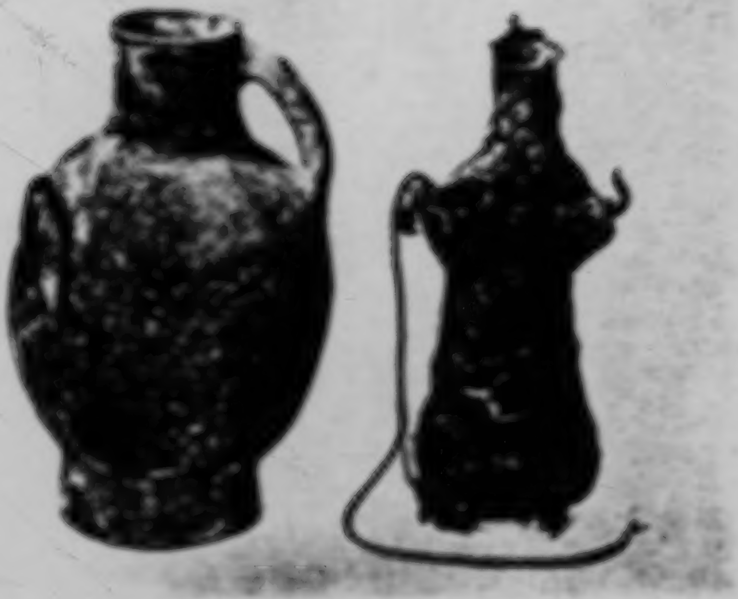

Fig. 47. Left: bottle-shaped jar with handle (E. 2296). Topzawa.
Right: with container made of a whole tanned kid skin (E. 2295). Bebiba.

When the jars that

323 I had an opportunity to watch being modelled were formed, they were dried in the sun where they assumed a greyish tint, thereafter about ten at a time arranged in a pile, a larger jar being placed on its side in the middle. The others, placed in a circle, lean up against this. This pile, resting on the ground out of doors some distance from the house, is then covered by a mound formed of flat briquettes made of cattle dung kneaded with straw and dried on the walls of the house. Firing lasts three hours, after which the jars are placed on one of the flat roofs of the house to cool. The colour of the finished jars is reddish-brown with black traces of the firing (cf. E. 2296, bottle-shaped, 1.280 m. high).

Under the production of clay vessels must also be reckoned the making of the rectangular type of large grain silos or decorated with rims. These are of dried clay, neither fired nor glazed, to be found in the more remote villages.

Rowanduz area, and approximately also to area 3 of Map 1. It does not 361
apply at all to area 6. 342

The technological peculiarities of the buildings may be
summarised as follows:

The shape is rectangular but there is no consistency in size or 342
plan. As a rule the main door faces downhill and leads out onto the
roof of the house immediately below but this practice varies. The
walls are usually of rough cut stone set in a mud plaster about two feet
thick, but the modern tendency is to substitute sun-dried mud brick for
the stone and plaster. Some houses are two stories high but this is
rather unusual; in such cases the upper storey is reached by an outside
ladder. All rooms have windows in the outside wall but, except in the
Agha's houses, there are very rarely any shutters. The fire is set in
a small floor pit; there is sometimes a proper smoke vent in the roof
but more usually the only escape for smoke is through the window. The
roof is flat, sloping downwards slightly towards the front; the main
roof beams run horizontally, parallel to the hill contours, while over
them is laid a thick layer of thin branches about the thickness of pea-
sticks. This is given a top dressing several inches thick of a
slurry made from lime, ashes and rubble. In dry weather this sets
hard and provides a perfectly rigid floor, but it is not a true cement.
Under rain, it quickly goes soft and must be kept constantly rolled if
leaks are to be avoided. The furnishings of a Kurdish house are 352
extremely meagre. A variety of cooking utensils are the chief items. 415 •
There is seldom a chair or a table. Bedding consists of felt quilts,
perhaps a rug or two, and blankets. During the daytime these are
rolled up in a corner and pushed out of the way. It may be mentioned 342
that the most valuable parts of the house are the roof beams.
Straight baulks of timber of adequate length are hard to obtain, and
only Aghas can afford anything really substantial. If for any reason
a peasant decides to build a new house, he dismantles the roof of his
old one and uses the materials for his new house. A village site that
has been abandoned thus reverts almost immediately to common scrub.
The limitations of this type of architecture are chiefly defined by the
deficiency of materials. This is demonstrated in the houses of the
wealthier Aghas and Sheikhs where by adding refinements such as wooden
floors, glass windows and hinged doors extremely comfortable houses
can be created from a design essentially similar to that of the
ordinary peasant's house. With any levelling up of the general
economic status of the community similar modifications of the peasant
architecture may also be expected. Building is nowadays a specialist 331
craft; an expert is usually called in from the town, the client 463
supplying the materials. The employment of town experts is probably
correlated with the adoption of mudbrick instead of stone and plaster 342
noted above.